THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) The revised draft National Water Policy was considered in the 4th meeting of National Water Resources Council held on 7th July, 2000 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister for finalisation.

The deliberations established a broad consensus among the states on most of the issues contained in the proposed policy. However, some areas of differences still remain. In order to achieve greater convergence and agreement on these issues it has been decided to constitute a Working Group of Minister of all the States/UTs chaired by Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources.

Desilting of River Ganga

306. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that because of massive silting, the river Ganga particularly in Bihar, U.P. and Bengal has significantly strayed from its traditional course;

(b) whether it is a fact that Farakkha Barrage is seriously impending the flow of water of river Ganga and causing massive silting; and

(c) what steps Government are contemplating to remove the silt and take other steps to restore the purity of river Ganga?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) No study to ascertain the extent of straying of river Ganga from its traditional course has been carried out. However, the river Ganga attempts to stray from its traditional course due to its meandering nature in alluvial reach depending upon water discharge, sediment load and slope of the river bed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Flood Management Works including desilting of rivers is a State Subject and as such these works are planned, executed and maintained by the respective States out of their own State Plan Funds according to the priorities fixed by them. Central Government as per existing procedure provides technical advice and conducts appraisal of schemes when referred by the State Governments for clearance. No proposal/scheme for removal of silt and to take further steps

to restore the purity of the river Ganga has been received in this Ministry. However, Ministry of Environment and Forest operates a project viz. Ganga Action Plan to restore the purity of Ganga.

Clearance of Projects by Central Water Commission

†307. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether several projects from many States are lying pending with Central Water Commission for its approval since long;

(b) if so, the reasons for the pendency of these projects alongwith the State-wise details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have issued guidelines to Central Water Commission for granting and early approval to these projects;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the names of the projects which have been accorded sanction by the Central Water Commission as per the guidelines of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) and (b) Statewise details of 167 Projects received from State Government for appraisal alongwith their estimated cost and present status of appraisal is given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below).

(c) Yes Sir.

(d) In case of Major Irrigation and Multipurpose Projects the scrutiny at Central Water Commission shall be completed in 38 weeks time and for Medium Irrigation Projects 18 weeks time from the date of receipt of project proposals in Central Water Commission where the inter-state aspects have been resolved and hydrology and economic viability of the project is found acceptable.

(e) The names of the projects which have been accorded sanction by the Central Water Commission as per the guidelines of the Government is given in the Statement enclosed.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.